

# **A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ALASKA AVIATION**

**COMPILED BY**

**DALE A. STIRLING**

**MAY 1985**

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## **Introduction**

Aviation and Alaska go hand in hand. Since the late 1920s the airplane has been an important link in the state's transportation network. The application of rotary and fixed-wing aircraft in trade and commerce continues to be a vital component of Alaska's economy. Whether private, commercial, or military, aviation is an invaluable Alaska institution.

In recent years research of Alaska's aviation past has become more popular. Yet the amount of research pales in comparison to that of the continental United States and Canada. Therefore, this partly annotated bibliography is designed to provide impetus for scholarly research of Alaska's aviation history. Published works not considered in this historical bibliography is juvenile books, newspaper articles, and technical publications.

Research for this bibliography took place at the libraries of the University of Alaska, Anchorage and Fairbanks campuses, Alaska Historical Library, Alaska State Archives, Alaska Air Command-Office of History, and Alaska Department of Transportation. Lloyd Jarman (Bellevue, WA), Robert Stevens (Seattle, WA), and Don Dawson (Ketchikan, AK) provided valuable assistance and suggestions.

The bibliography is organized into four sections; 1) organizational and government agency publications; 2) theses; 3) nonfiction books; and 4) periodical articles. Citations are numbered consecutively, 1-269, allowing them to be keyed into a people, place, and subject index.

This bibliography cites nearly all major works relating to Alaska aviation published between 1940 and 1984. As a research tool it should be valuable to aerospace historians, armchair aviators, students, and those in the aviation industry. It should serve as a basis for continued research in the field.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
USAF-CIVIL AIR PATROL PACIFIC LIAISON REGION (AU)  
MATHER AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA 95655

1 May 1985

Dale Stirling, Historian  
Heritage North  
3809 Barbara Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Dale,

I have received word of your planned book on a Bibliography of Alaska Aviation, and I receive the announcement of such with extreme enthusiasm. There is a tremendous need for a comprehensive statement on an Air Dependent Community, something that could be translated into a teaching/learning device for the understanding of how an airplane can impact a total community. The classic example of that type of community is the State of Alaska.

During my many regular visits to Alaska schools in sponsoring Aerospace Education Workshops, I have been concerned that there needed to be educational materials devoted to the history and impact of aviation for the State of Alaska. In the past years I have been attempting to compile data on Alaskan Aviation for eventual educational lessons.

Obviously, you have done a tremendous amount of research and devoted hours toward your bibliography and should be commended for this task. Your book will give to the citizens of Alaska just one more means to be proud of their fantastic state and how aviation has and is still playing such a vital role in their livelihood and progress.

Congratulations on your leadership efforts and pride in your wonderful state. I will be looking forward to your publication.

Sincerely

*Jule Zumwalt*  
JULE ZUMWALT  
Director of Aerospace Education

## ORGANIZATION/GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

1. Alaska Historical Aircraft Society. 1983. *Alaska's Military Artifacts*. A Special Report to the Alaska State Legislature and the Special Senate Committee for Veteran Affairs, Juneau.

A lengthy report that describes in great detail the location of downed aircraft throughout the state. A report valuable for historic preservationists and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which is responsible for clean-up of the Aleutian Islands, where the majority of downed aircraft are found.

2. Alaska Historical Aircraft Society. 1983. *A Proposal For An Alaska Air Museum, Anchorage*.

Submitted to Governor Sheffield recommending the establishment of an Alaska aviation museum. Describes geographical location, architectural needs and specifications for research, restoration and other associated facilities. Also includes a brief history and description of existing historic aircraft needing restoration, preservation and storage.

3. Buchanan, John. ND. *Sitka's First Plane*. Unpublished Manuscript in the Files of the Office of Naval Aviation History, Washington, D.C.

A short manuscript, which details the events behind the arrival of Sitka's first plane in 1923. Written by an eyewitness who has a good grasp of reporting. An important addition to the history of aviation in Southeastern Alaska.

4. Civil Aeronautics Authority. 1953. *Alaska Resorts and Recreational Areas Accessible by Plane*. Washington, D.C.

An in-agency publication delineating popular areas for recreationists reachable by airplane. Includes important data on territorial airfield conditions and rural economies.

5. Civil Aeronautics Authority. 1956. *Air Traffic Control Division-History of Facilities and Service*. 8th Regional Office, Anchorage.

A listing of all CAA facilities in Alaska with dates of startup, costs for operation, and other data reflecting management and operations of remote aviation flight facilities.

6. Cloe, John. 1983. *The Air Force in Alaska, Part I: Early Flights and Strategic Importance 1920-1940*. Office of History, Alaska Air Command.

A short narrative history of early military aviation in the territory. Includes some historic photographs. A good concise history of the Air Force in territorial Alaska.

7. Erickson, Stanley J. 1971. *A Brief History of Federal Involvement in Civil Aviation: Airports in Alaska, 1936-1970*. Unpublished Manuscript in the Public Affairs Office, Federal Aviation Administration, Alaska Region, Anchorage.

A short paper focusing on airport development in Alaska. The paper denotes a 1936 beginning, but it deals mostly with development of airfields in the 1950s. Some interesting material, but no references are cited so its accuracy is in question.

8. Federal Aviation Administration. 1962. *The FAA and Aviation in Alaska*. Alaska Region, Public Affairs Office, Anchorage.

A short pamphlet describing the role of the FAA in Alaska shortly after statehood. Includes some interesting statistics on aviation economics in the north.

9. Gray, John and Philip Rowe. 1982. *An Alaska Census of Transportation*. AEIDC, University of Alaska, Anchorage.

An important publication because it provides a clear picture of the significance aerial transportation plays in the state economy. Includes a very short overview of aviation in Alaska's past.

10. Hoke, Alexander. 1981. *Airships: Potential Alaskan Transportation Alternative*. A Report Prepared for the House Research Agency, Juneau,

A fascinating obscure report prepared for the state interim transportation committee on the feasibility of using airships for more than logging purposes. Has some interesting conclusions and is well illustrated with drawings) photographs and graphics.

11. Kennedy, Michael. 1981. *Arctic Flying Machines*. Alaska Division of Parks: Office of History and Archeology, Anchorage

A general narrative overview of Alaska aviation history. Not original research, but combines some basic texts and arrives at some interesting conclusions about aviation's impact on Alaska.

12. Lee, Frank. 1982. *The Historical Remains of the Battle of Alaska*. A Report to the Alaska State Legislature, Special Committee on Veteran Affairs, Juneau.

A rare report largely written by Paul Fox, an aviation preservationist from Anchorage. In many case not accurate, but it provides locations of downed aircraft and offers suggestions for preservation and restoration of aircraft throughout Alaska.

13. McCoy, John. 1982. *The Assignment of Air Force Women to Alaska Air Command's Remote Sites*. Office of History, Alaska Air Command.

Part of the command's continuous effort to publish historical documents on the Air Force in Alaska. Relates to a unique movement of women to more front line positions, said to be an example of the "new spirit" of the Air Force and the military in general in America.

14. Nash, Roderick. 1982. *Comments on the DEIS for Management for GANPAP with Emphasis on the Problem of Air Access and Wilderness Values*. University of California, Santa Barbara.

As author of the classic *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Nash offers his unique perspective on aviation and wilderness values in northern Alaska.

15. Renstrom, Arthur. 1944. *Aeronautics in Alaska. A List of References*. Library of Congress, Division of Aeronautics, Washington, D.C.

The first reference work to be published on Alaska aviation. Includes mostly periodical references. A valuable research tool, most of which has been incorporated into this bibliography with the permission of the Library of Congress.

16. Stirling, Dale. 1982. *An Overview of Aviation History in Alaska, With an Emphasis on Float and Ski plane Use*. Alaska Department of Natural Resources: Division of Research and Development, Anchorage.

The first archival study of Alaskan aviation written for the State of Alaska's navigability program. Analyses the use of float and ski-planes in trade and commerce.



## THESES/DISSERTATIONS

17. Carr, Remaens Edwin. 1946. *Great Falls to Nome: The Inland Air Route to Alaska*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Minnesota, St. Paul.

A thorough and well researched study of the inland air-route to Alaska used for the ferrying of fighters and bombers to Russia in World War Two. All aspects of the Lend-lease Program are discussed and analyzed. Primary sources are used throughout the study. A valuable addition to the body of literature on the Lend-lease program as well as on Alaskan aviation during World War Two.

18. Francaviglia, Robert. 1973. *The Alaska-Siberia Aircraft Ferry Project 1942-45*. A Senior Seminar Paper for History 476-Historical Methods, University of Alaska, Anchorage.

This paper uses primary and secondary sources to provide a narrative history of the Lend-lease program in Alaska. As a seminar paper, and, more importantly, as a senior paper, it is informative and compliments the work of Edwin R. Carr.

19. Ross, James. 1969. *Construction and Operation of a World War II Air Force Forward Base: Shemya, Alaska 1943-1945*. Master's Thesis, University of Maine.

This is a fine administrative history of the Shemya Army Air Force Base. Ross's research takes into account the everyday problems of logistical support for an active forward air base. The thesis is well written and the use of primary sources imparts a scholarly tone.

## NON-FICTION BOOKS

20. Chambers, John R. 1970. Arctic Bush Mission. Seattle: Superior Publishing Company.

Chamber writes of his six years as a flying pastor for the people of Anaktuvuk Pass. His airplane?, the 4 passenger Cessna 70--the "arctic messenger." The many photographs make for a unique record of arctic transportation.

21. Coombs, Charles. 1961. Bush Flying in Alaska. New York: Morrow and Company.

Almost an elementary school text, but replete with good advice for bush pilots in Alaska. Contains brief but well written sections on bush flying, its pilots, uses, and problems with arctic conditions. The book also describes flying for government agencies, sport, survival, and industry.

22. Day, Beth. 1970. Glacier Pilot. New York: Rinehart & Winston.

Possibly the most popular book on Alaska aviation, Day reviews the famous career of Bob Reeve as well as his flying contemporaries. It is also a book about the maturation of aviation in Alaska in the 1940s and 1950s, and is part biography and chronicle. Particularly good are the stories of Reeve's many aviation escapades.

23. Downie, Don and Julia. 1980. Your Alaska Flight Plan. Blue Ridge Summit: Tab Books.

The complete guide to filing flight plan for a trip to anywhere in Alaska. The aviator's equivalent of the *Milepost*, full of tips, hints and suggestions for surviving while flying Alaskan skyways.

24. Ellis, Robert. 1969. What. . No Landing Field. Haines: Chilkat Press.

A short historical pamphlet written by a pioneer of Southeastern Alaska aviation. Ellis offers the reader many fine historic photographs and writes lovingly about his early days in the business, from the establishment of Ellis Air Transport in 1936 at Ketchikan, to its merger with Cordova Airlines in the 1960s.

25. Greiner, James. 1974. Wager With the Wind. New York: Rand McNally.

The story of famed glacier and bush pilot Don Sheldon. Greiner crafts a well told biography and supplements it with many photographs. Includes much information not only on Alaska aviation but also about mountaineering and the state's natural resources.

26. Helmericks, Harmon. 1969. The Last of the Bush Pilots. New York: Knopf.

A well written account of Alaska's bush pilots by a bush pilot; this book is also part autobiographical. The author discusses in detail the careers of some of Alaska's well known aviators and air-services in addition to numerous tales of bush pilots' adventures and near-crashes (as well as crashes).

27. Herron, Edward. 1959. *Wings Over Alaska*. New York: Julian Messner, Inc.

One of many average semi-autobiographical works on one of Alaska's famous bush pilots. Herron offers no new information or insights about Carl Ben Eielson, but his writing is engaging. The book emphasizes the firsts in Alaska aviation that Eielson achieved.

28. Janson, Lone. 1981. *Mudhole Smith, Alaska Flyer*. Edmonds: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company.

A biography of Merle "Mudhole" Smith, a bush pilot who came north to Alaska in 1937 and flew out of Cordova for three decades. Janson recounts well the career of Smith, as a self-taught flyer and aviation adventurer. Also touched upon are the other pilots who were contemporaries of Smith and shared in his adventures.

29. Jarman, Lloyd. 1971. *Bush Pilots Log*. Self Published, Bellevue, WA.

A book of cartoons relating to typical situations that face bush pilots in Alaska. Based largely on Jarman's experiences in Southeastern Alaska in the 1930s.

30. Jarman, Lloyd. 1982. *Bush Pilots Log*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition . Self Published, Bellevue, WA.

Same good humor as the first edition of the book.

31. Jefford, Jack. 1981. *Winging It*. New York: Rand-McNally.

The autobiographical account of one of the last frontier's most engaging aviators. It tells the story of Jefford from his barnstorming days to his over thirty year career with the Alaska region office of the Federal Aviation Administration. Stocked with personal insights and anecdotes. Well worth reading.

32. Mills, Stephen and James Philips. 1976. *Sourdough Sky*. New York: Bonanza Books.

A pictorial history of the bush pilot in Alaska. A good basic text on early Alaskan aviators, their exploits and their aircraft. Well researched although not scholarly in intent.

33. Mills, Stephen and James Philips. 1979. *Arctic War Planes*. New York: Bonanza Books.

A profusely illustrated history of aviation in Alaska during World War II. Most of the text and photographs relate to the Aleutian theater. Another well researched basic text on Alaska aviation.

34. Owens, Fern Royer. 1949. *Sky Pilot of Alaska*. Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

A rare book about flying missionaries in Alaska. Includes exciting accounts of bush travel in the name of the gospel.

35. Place, Marian. 1972. New York to Nome. New York: MacMillan & Company.

The story of the 'Black Wolf Squadron' which flew from New York to Nome in 1920 in four DeHavilland DH-4s. This book charts all aspects of that historic flight, which included flying 9,000 miles in 112 flying hours without a major mishap. An excellent book about an important event in Alaskan and military aviation history.

36. Potter, Jean. 1945. The Flying North. New York: Curtis Publishing Company.

One of the first books to describe the exploits of Alaska's most famous bush pilots. Essentially a biography of nine pioneer aviators. She spent a year and a half talking with pilots before writing the book. A good basic text on Alaska's bush pilots.

37. Satterfield, Archie. 1972. Alaska Bush Pilots in the Float Country. Seattle: Superior Publishing Company.

One of the best works on Alaska aviation. A pictorial history of aviation in Southeastern Alaska mostly, stressing the use of float equipped aircraft and amphibious aircraft. Includes many fine historic photographs.

38. Satterfield, Archie. 1981. The Alaska Airlines Story. Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company.

An epic of the development of Alaska's largest air carrier. The author provides a well researched and pictorially exciting text that is scholarly in scope yet enjoyable at every turn. A must for all Alaska aviation libraries.

39. Sherman, Faith. 1981. Goodbye Goose: The Story of Ellis Airlines. Privately Published.

This is an informal pictorial history of Ketchikan's Ellis Air Lines. The book focuses on the legacy of the aircraft that became the symbol and spirit of the company--the Grumman Goose. Sherman has written a sprightly and well illustrated history of one of Alaska's pioneer air-services.

40. Stark, Charles R. 1957. The Bering Sea Eagle. Caldwell; Caxton Printers.

A personable biography of Harry Blut, who in the 1930s was an aerial fire spotter for the U.S. Forest Service, an air-taxi operator and rescue pilot. The book is easy going and focuses on the many adventures in aviation that Blut experienced.

41. Wachel, Pat. 1967. Oscar Winchell, Alaska's Flying Cowboy. ~Minneapolis: T.S. Denison and Company, Inc.

An informal biography--in the first person--of one of Alaska's most unique bush pilots. Discusses his early days in South Dakota and his eventual arrival in Alaska and his career with Gillam Airlines, McGee Airways, and eventually Alaska-Interior Airlines.

## PERIODICAL/JOURNAL ARTICLES

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43. Ackerman, William. 1963. "Pilots Vs. Stork." *Alaska Sportsman*, December.
44. Ackerman, William. 1963. "Alaskans Try to Preserve Old C-47s." *Alaska Sportsman*, December.
45. Ackerman, William. 1964. "Chuck Hamilton Sees SOS at Flores." *Alaska Sportsman*, May.
46. Ackerman, William. 1964 "Survival of Martin Ott's Plane Crash." *Alaska Sportsman*, May.
47. Adams, Al. 1940. "Into the Mountains of Alaska in Mid-Winter." *Douglas Airview*, December.
48. *Airlanes*. 1943. "Direct to Tokyo via Alaska." October.
49. *Airlanes*. 1944. "Alaska Mission." August.
50. *Air News*. 1942. "Alaska, Bridge to the Orient." March.
51. *Airpost Journal*. 1940. "Alaska Pioneer Flights." March.
52. *Airpost Journal*. 1940. "The First Flights in Alaska." March.
53. *Airpost Journal*. 1940. "Alaska Route is Inaugurated." March.
54. Aitken, Clarine. 1981. "Forgotten Journey." *Alaska Journal*, Special Edition.
55. *Alaska Call*. 1959. "Alaska Civil Air Patrol." July.
56. *Alaska Industry*. 1969. "Hercules is Slope's Beast of Burden." January.
57. *Alaska Industry*. 1970. "Haines Bush Pilot Can't Seem to Crash." January.
58. *Alaska Industry*. 1982. "Reeve Aleutian Airways." March.
59. *Alaska Life*. 1940. "Alaska Joins the Great Airlines of America." August.
60. *Alaska Life*. 1941. "Alaska Sees its Third First Flight." June.
61. *Alaska Life*. 1943. "Alaska Shows the Way." March.
62. *Alaska Life*. 1943. "Forced Landing in the Arctic." April.
63. *Alaska Miner*. 1980. "Helicopter Firm Expands Operation." February.
64. *Alaska Miner*. 1981. "Aerial Photography in Available." May.

65. *Alaska Miner*. 1984. "Monument to Wiley Post Completed at Flat." February.
66. Albert, Rose. 1981. "Ruby Sees its First Planes." *Alaska Journal*.
67. *American Aviation*. 1940. "Airports Cause Alaskan Accidents." July.
68. *American Aviation*. 1941. "CAB Examiner Warns of Destructive Competition in Alaska Aviation." January.
69. *American Aviation*. 1943. "Postwar Air Route to Batvia via Fairbanks and Nome Sought by Chicago & Southern." May.
70. *American Aviation*. 1943. "Inland Asks Alaska Line, 17 other Routes." June.
71. *American Aviation*. 1943. "Northwest Seeks Route to Tokyo via Alaska." September.
72. *American Aviation*. 1943. "Intra-Company Profit Diversion Argued in PAA Alaska Hearing." December.
73. *American Aviation*. 1943. "Alaskan Aircraft Operations for Year Issues." December.
74. *American Aviation*. 1944. "PAA Consolidates Pacific & Alaska Divisions." January.
75. *American Aviation*. 1944. "Alaska Seen as Center of World Air Transport." January.
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77. *American Aviation*. 1944. "Examiner Questions Alaska Airlines Financial Condition." April.
78. *American Aviation*. 1944. "CAB Denies Alaska Airlines' Request to Purchase Cordova." July.
79. *American Aviation*. 1944. "Francis Duncan named V.P. of Alaska Airlines." July.
80. *American Aviation*. 1944. Alaska Seen by A.L. Bulwinkle as Air Gateway to Orient." September.
81. Armagnac, Alden P. 1943. "Look North—and See How We Can Smash Japan with Bombers from Alaska." *Popular Science Monthly*, June.
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93. Balog, James. 1957. "Operation Ice-Skate." *Alaska Sportsman*, November.
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